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ABSTRACT

This basic aim of this paper is to explore and describe how the results of experimentation are transmitted from the "laboratory" campus to other campuses and to propose ways of improving and expanding the dissemination process. Chapters cover: (1) New College as a model, (2) "new" elements in New College's program, (3) the educational climate of the 1960's, (4) spread of New College's innovative policies, (5) transmitting information, (6) publications and publicity, (7) faculty and student migration, (8) national, regional, and local organizations, (9) trustees, (10) accreditation, (11) the Union for Experimental Colleges, (12) foundations and government agencies, (13) miscellaneous methods of exchange, plus (14) conclusions and recommendations. (Author/KE)

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Transmitting Information about Experiments in Higher Education

New College as a Case Study

John Elmendorf

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FOREWORD

The Academy for Educational Development, Inc., has, since its founding, been intimately involved in helping institutions of higher education find new approaches to meet the challenges of our time. To this end, we asked John Elmendorf, formerly president of New College in Sarasota, Florida, one of the outstanding experimental colleges, to examine how the innovative colleges could best transmit the results of their experiments to educators on other campuses. His findings, based on visits throughout the United States to many of the experimental and more traditional colleges, interviews with their administrators, and broad personal experience, are presented herewith.

The Academy gratefully acknowledges Mr. Elmendorf's efforts as well as the support of the Exxon Education Foundation, which made this study possible.

Alvin C. Eurich
President, Academy for Educational Development
New York
March 1975

ONE

Introduction

Before World War II, homogeneity was the dominant characteristic of undergraduate institutions. While there were minor differences in style, standards, and status, there were no differences in principle. Once the experimental colleges were established, however, they slowly began to exert an influence for change, an influence in some ways out of proportion to their number. For, relatively few colleges in the United States are, or claim to be, intentionally experimental. Among those that come most readily to mind are Antioch, Sarah Lawrence, Bennington, Hampshire, Prescott, Goddard, St. John's, Reed, and New College in Sarasota. (Other institutions, which are parts of larger units, are Evergreen State College, Old Westbury, Johnson College, Redlands, the University of the Pacific, Justin Morrill College, New College at Hofstra, New College of the University of Alabama, and the University of California at Santa Cruz.)

Although all these colleges once shared a kind of missionary attitude toward higher education, not all of them have been as explicitly articulate about their perceived mission as Hampshire College, whose founding in 1970 was heralded by the publication of a full-length book, *The Making of a College*. This work detailed clearly a set of ambitious goals, not only for Hampshire's own future, but also for the entire world of higher learning:

> Hampshire proposes to be both an undergraduate institution of excellence and an innovative force in higher education generally.
>
> Proposing to be "an innovative force in higher education generally" means that Hampshire College will be bold enough to make no small plans. The College intends to be an "experimenting" one, not tied to a narrow or doctrinaire "experimental" orthodoxy. It intends to innovate and experiment, in every dimension of collegiate education where it appears promising to do so. It plans to sustain an experimental mood as far forward in time as it can. It will regard no cows, academic or of other breed, as sacred. And it intends to have an impact on all of education. Hampshire College may be new and far from abounding in means, but it intends to make a difference.

The earliest documents in the history of the experimental colleges reveal that the Hampshire phenomenon was neither new nor unusually optimistic. Sarah Lawrence, Bennington, Goddard, and Antioch made pronouncements that follow the same theme: the new institution is perceived as a model, not necessarily to be copied in detail but an example for "educating" the young in more human ways. Yet none of these documents contained any formula for how this was to happen. Presumably, the impact of the institution was to be so dramatic that educators could merely copy when they wanted to. Indeed, these few institutions were so different that in the earliest days this is what happened. Their very uniqueness kept them visible,

and they contributed greatly to creating the present diversity of institutions in the United States.

Today, however, experimentation in higher education is commonplace. Economic, social, and intellectual demands have all contributed to the need institutions feel for change. The knowledge explosion, the near-universal accessibility of higher learning, and the countercultural revolution have all taxed the planning ingenuity of educators; and the inexorable rise in costs of goods and services has made innovation not only attractive but also imperative.

In a UNESCO pamphlet entitled "Understanding Change in Education: An Introduction," A. M. Huberman has written:

> Schools as social institutions will change more rapidly during periods of general social changes; increasing public concern for quality education; increasing interest in technological advances; higher allocations for research and development; greater affluence; growth within the education system itself; the recent educational qualifications of parents and graduates; the growing proportion of the gross national product devoted to formal education. . . .

Almost all these conditions obtain today. It is not surprising, however, that innovation is occurring in geometrically spiraling increments. Innovation or change takes two forms, "creative change" and "deficit change," to use the terminology of Huberman. "Creative change" means a voluntary and self-imposed desire to change, to redefine problems, to recognize new problems, and to devise new ways of dealing with them. "Deficit change" means a change resulting from pressure from without, or, in the words of Huberman, changes

> occasioned by crisis, competition or conflict: student or teacher strikes, dissatisfaction of citizens at large, or of national officials, internal conflicts between administrators and teachers, shortages of teachers or facilities, so-called "educational emergencies."

There is much reason to believe that many of today's innovations are primarily a result of pressure from without rather than creativeness from within, although both elements are no doubt present. But a few cynics still perceive all change as mere response to financial exigency.

New educational models are surfacing at an unprecedented rate. From the Federal government to the local school district, from the Carnegie Commission to the faculty "task force," there is a ferment and a search for alternatives in higher education. Books, articles, commission reports, faculty minutes, and presidents' annual reviews are all concerned with the need for changes that will "humanize" education, increase its validity for more and more students, and, it is hoped, do all this at a price we are able to pay.

Out of the cacophony of voices, a new vocabulary is emerging. Increasingly, we hear of the open university, the college without walls, the nonresident (or external) degree, of independent study, nongraded curriculum, learning contracts, portfolios, and tutorials.

The very profusion of novelty, however, has created a major communications lag. The institution intent on change can no longer take a look at a few successful examples of nontraditional behavior, evaluate them in terms of its own needs and capabilities, and then proceed to adapt the elements that appear suitable. The choices today are too numerous, the information is too incomplete, and access to the information is so diffuse as to make the task all but impossible.

This paper grew out of a rather simple concern by the author, who was president of New College in Sarasota from 1965 to 1972. The college, which sought to experiment, was receiving considerable sums of money, much of which was given with a view toward making it a "laboratory" for higher education, a place where new ventures could be tried, new limits tested, and new models created. This in

fact was what did take place. The laboratory was performing its mission—with one increasingly obvious exception: few knew what was being learned in it.

Evaluation is an important step in transmitting information. One of the most glaring shortcomings at New College, as at many similar institutions, was that there were no adequate methods of self-evaluation. When the college was established in 1964, one of its key officers was the college examiner, a psychologist highly trained in tests and measurements. His sole function, in theory at least, was to conduct an ongoing internal evaluation. In the early years, the evaluation was useful, particularly in keeping an academic program within reasonable limits of the national standards. In this way, for example, through administering various instruments with national norms, the college could reassure itself periodically that its students were measuring up to national averages, particularly in terms of knowledge of content. As the college progressed, however, and as not only internal but also external changes occurred, such comparisons seemed less useful. The position of college examiner was eliminated and never restored. As a result, when still further changes occurred, only faith and some kind of institutional intuition supported their validity. When, in 1970, Paul Dressel assembled a number of brief papers from each of eight experimenting colleges—among them New College—in order to assess their educational value, he found that the techniques and standards they used to evaluate themselves diverged widely. Few of the standards were objective, and none of them met hardnosed criteria. The volume that grew out of this effort, *The New Colleges: Towards an Appraisal*, is an elegant testimony to this generic shortcoming of innovative institutions.

The basic aim of this paper, therefore, is to explore and describe how the results of experimentation are transmitted from the "laboratory" campus to other campuses, using New College as a model wherever possible, and to propose

ways of improving and expanding the dissemination process. For, clearly there is a serious need today to improve both dissemination and information about new departures in higher education.

TWO

New College as a Model

I began this study with the idea that the ways innovative institutions directly affect the policies and procedures of other institutions could be demonstrated by using a statistical survey or series of surveys. We would examine what information is available (such as catalogues, letters, learned papers, and magazine and newspaper articles) and then present some assessments of attitudes of members of all elements of academe. However, rather than being a quantitatively measurable phenomenon, the influence between the innovators and those interested in innovating becomes in some ways more a psychological-philosophical problem. Why? Perhaps because change in higher education has occurred at such a remarkably fast rate during the past seven or eight years, or perhaps because the enormous increases in the numbers of students being surveyed has required new approaches, or finally because such widely circulated reports as those being regularly produced by the

Carnegie Commission, the Newman Committee, and others have made known and recommended so many changes.

"New" Elements in New College's Program

Chartered in 1960, New College proclaimed its intention to become an institution that would base its entire academic program on what were then a series of "new" principles.

- ☐ The B.A. degree would be awarded in three years rather than the traditional four.
- ☐ There were to be no grades—letter grades, word grades, or number grades.
- ☐ Class attendance, while recognized as being useful, was not to be required in any way, and total class hours for any subject were to be greatly reduced.
- ☐ Periods of independent study were to be scheduled regularly. During these periods, students might or might not remain on campus, would attack a specific piece of work quite independently from other students (and in fact from faculty as such), and would attempt to produce a product attesting to their ability to identify, solve, and present a problem or set of problems.
- ☐ The college was to be organized without a departmental structure, indeed without any tightly designed areas, but rather with the minimal organizational groups necessary for effective functioning and a rather wide open concept of the organization of knowledge, thus freeing the student and the faculty from tightly organized requirements in a major field.
- ☐ Broad mastery of rather wide areas of human knowledge, combined with intensive, highly personal exploration of a single field or problem (culminating in a senior project demonstrating excellence), was to substitute for the usual long lists of required subjects, major fields, and senior theses within a field.
- ☐ Strong emphasis was to be given to field experience, internships, and other forms of work-study learning.
- ☐ In the absence of any structured curriculum, there was

to be individual programming, resulting in the probability of widely differing courses of study between students.

- ☐ There were to be no required courses or prerequisites.
- ☐ Time sequences and academic calendars would be unconventional, irregular, and very probably subject to considerable variation from year to year.
- ☐ Some courses were to be student initiated and, at least in part, student taught.
- ☐ Heavy emphasis was to be given to interdisciplinary studies.
- ☐ The basic orientation of learning that was to prevail at the college was thematic rather than disciplinary in the traditional sense.
- ☐ A rather broad definition was to be given to what constituted "legitimate" areas of learning.
- ☐ Within the college, processes would be emphasized rather than content, discovery rather than direction.
- ☐ Policy on dropping out, staying out, and returning was to be liberal, thereby encouraging irregular and perhaps more human rates of learning.

In addition, students were to participate actively in collegiate governance at all levels, and the parietal rules set for the college were to be absolutely minimal.

Few of these ideas, if any, were original with New College. Off-campus studies had long been characteristic of Antioch, Northeastern, and other cooperative colleges. Nongraded studies, while by no means very common at that time, were not unknown, and such institutions as Sarah Lawrence and Bennington had long given up the regular and the competitive use of grading systems. Even the overall organization of the college bore a strong resemblance to the structure of some of the European universities, particularly those of the British. All put together, however, the venture was sufficiently unusual to attract attention and interesting students willing and able to pursue this kind of program.

Another feature of New College that was, and to some

extent remains, unusual, was its commitment to being open to change and designed so that change was almost inevitable. By 1971 much of the original design of the college had changed, more often in emphasis than philosophy. A heavy reliance on comprehensive examinations, for example, had been supplanted by a much looser structure held together by a system of "learning contracts," periodic agreements between individual faculty members and students that specified what work was to be accomplished and how it was to be evaluated. This contract system permitted, even encouraged, unusual combinations of disciplines, problem-oriented (rather than discipline-oriented) learning, and an increased sense of individual responsibility for the design and execution of learning experiences.

Also, by 1971 independent study had been expanded from the rather brief experiences that characterized the early years to include nearly one-half of the student's entire undergraduate work. Thus, using the contract system again as the adhesive, a student could spend as many as four out of nine terms engaged in independent work either on or off campus, in the United States or abroad. Or, a student could work in fields where the college lacked adequate instructional resources but could provide direction and guidance in relating a student to outside sources of expertise in the area he or she was probing.

The Educational Climate of the 1960's

Other institutions looked upon New College as an institution worthy of study as a model. The college was visited by many people from other colleges and universities looking for ways to introduce changes. These visitors were also reading about, talking to, and going to other institutions. And periodicals and meetings of the several learned socie-

ties concerned with higher education were all presenting and interpreting the problems of higher education at that time. We know that the "Berkeley crisis" had created an emotional climate that focused still further the attention of the country on some of the problems of higher education, thereby intensifying exploration into their solution.

There was, in other words, a Zeitgeist that favored innovation, exploration, and change. All this came at a time when overwhelming numbers of students were entering colleges and universities, student bodies were more diverse than ever, and society was demanding that higher education not only be available to everyone but that it also be regarded as a requisite for mature entry into society. In this atmosphere, such institutions as New College were put under the microscope.

Spread of New College's Innovative Policies

One outcome of the intensive examination of New College was the factoring out of each part of its program. Institutions looking at the total New College program and others like it attempted to extract elements that might be adapted successfully. Thus, for example, the elimination of grades—quite apart from their role as philosophical components in a total system—was scrutinized and little by little rather widely applied in institutions all over the country. Indeed, a rather hot debate was begun in such journals as *Change*, *Saturday Review*, and *Liberal Education*, and almost every aspect of the relationship of grading systems to learning was discussed. This debate, which has been by no means ended, grew out of the processes described above.

This is true also of independent study. Much is being written today about independent learning and experiential learning (there are lots of names for it); such people as

Professor James Coleman of Haverford have gone so far as to advocate building some form of independent *experiential* activity structurally into the life experience of *all* students. But, again, independent study in New College in 1965 was philosophically consistent with everything else at the college, and it is by no means certain that in extracting just that component, those who did so were not removing something that, at least at that time, was not literally factorable.

Elimination of grades. While Hampshire College was awaiting funding, those who were concerned with its eventual innovative worth were in touch with many other institutions, including New College. When Franklin K. Patterson and Charles R. Longsworth eventually wrote *The Making of a College*, they presented the model for Hampshire College and justified the presence of certain of its innovative characteristics in terms of the whole institution. The absence of a grading system, for example, was consistent with a philosophy that decried interpersonal competition among students.

The nondepartmental structure of Hampshire was consistent with the ideas of general learning outside the specific disciplines. This was not so in every institution that attempted to introduce innovative practices into what had been traditional programs. When Yale University, for example, announced with éclat that it was adopting a nongraded program, all it really did was change from letter grades to word grades and in essence reduce the system from five points to four points. This is understandable since it is unlikely that the entire structure of the undergraduate colleges at Yale could have been altered so much that a completely ungraded system would have been possible. It is this factor, often overlooked, that I believe has contributed both to the debate and the confusion about eliminating grades. For those institutions, either new or totally

revamped, that did adopt a no-grade policy, the policy has prospered with both students and faculty members. In others, however, where it was superimposed, it has not worked, and both students and faculty members in some colleges have begun to demand a return to traditional grading.

Elimination of credits. What is true for eliminating letter or number grades is also true for eliminating credit hours. While New College—a small, isolated, and intense community of 550 students in 1973—could quite easily substitute highly personalized and broad learning goals for its students quite apart from the traditional measuring systems, this was by no means the case in other institutions, particularly in the very large universities where size seemed to make necessary an almost mechanical method for determining when a student had completed a semester, a year, or a degree.

Nonetheless, attempts have been made even in quantitative ways. Both Evergreen State College and the University of Wisconsin at Green Bay have made efforts in this direction and in fact have succeeded to a large degree in finding models. These two institutions are among those that have imported a large number of faculty members from the experimental colleges. Thus, their two programs are probably more internally consistent than most, since at least a reasonable minority of their faculty would logically be expected to go along with this kind of system. That is not so everywhere, as attested to by various state universities with innovative intents that have found faculty resistance to eliminating credit systems far too strong to be overcome.

Elimination of departments. David Riesman and Christopher Jencks, in *The Academic Revolution,* have well described the near-autonomy of departments in most traditional institutions. It is not surprising, therefore, that the

nondepartmental concept is only marginally exportable. Again, Evergreen State College appears to have successfully adopted the concept. The University of California at Santa Cruz has created an elaborate structure involving a vertical (college) and a horizontal organization (boards of studies) in an attempt to diminish departmental hegemony. The results are, to say the least, ambiguous: the boards of studies have tried to act as departments—particularly in questions of promotion, retention, and tenure—while the colleges have been to some extent at their mercy, despite their declared intention to create interdisciplinary learning environments.

Examples from the New College experience suggest that an institution committed to change can profit from the experiences of the innovative colleges. One example may be illuminating. In 1965, Furman University in Greenville, South Carolina, was a respected, traditional institution with a program not very different from that of a number of small, superior church-related colleges and universities. When a new president proposed that Furman examine alternatives to its traditional structures, the faculty named a visiting committee and charged it with exploring the ways in which other institutions were responding to the pressures of the day. The committee visited a number of smaller colleges, including New College, and returned home convinced that there were ways in which Furman could change. After the usual delays involved in faculty decision making, Furman began to introduce independent study, internships, off-campus studies, interdisciplinary majors, and a number of other "new" practices. Today, Furman is still a respected small university, but it is experiencing a genuine renaissance. It has maintained quality enrollment in the face of declining admissions at the private colleges, and, at least in some circles, it is perceived as having integrated into a familiar and traditional pattern innovative elements that have strengthened its academic program.

THREE

Transmitting Information

Everyone involved in experiments in education is familiar with one of the ways information on changes is collected: A letter, phone call, or telegram that begins: "Our college is contemplating some major changes and has named a small group to study. . . . They would like to spend some time on your campus, discussing with those most closely connected with and responsible for the experiments. . . ." Too often there follow a hastily arranged visit, conversations with whomever can be found, a pleasant "thank you" letter—and silence. Rarely is it possible to find out what was learned, what was done about it, how it worked out in a different setting.

Ample evidence shows that colleges and universities are probing new dimensions, often for very serious reasons. Threats of falling enrollments, financial woes, faculty and student discontent, and trustee impatience—these pressures and others are leading even the most tradition-bound to

explore new techniques for survival. In recent years, administrators have had *Change*, the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, and a few other nationally circulated journals to help them with broad guidelines and suggestions. But, because so much information is needed, these aids are at best marginal, incomplete, and possibly on occasion misleading. When colleges look for other reliable channels of information about change, they are too often frustrated. Some invent effective devices of their own.

If the wholesale consumers of innovations in higher education are the educational institutions, retail consumers are the high school students and their parents, applicants for new faculty jobs, and college admissions counselors at high schools and prep schools.

College students and their parents have learned to depend on three basic sources of information about colleges—well-known and general excellent guides, such as *Cass & Birnbaum;* college counselors; and, possibly most important, word-of-mouth information from their sons' and daughters' peer groups or friends who have recently attended college. Even among these three groups, information is frequently out of date and not entirely complete, because it is impossible through normal channels to reflect the extremely rapid changes taking place, even in well-known institutions.

Recently David Truman, the president of Mount Holyoke College, which is usually perceived as being a conservative women's college in New England, noted that all too few of the students who were considering his college really knew what the possibilities were for a program to be geared to an individual and for experimentation. He pointed out, as was clear from a careful reading of the catalogue, that Mount Holyoke has clearly explained the options for off-campus study, field-experience learning, and a wide variety of programs. Nonetheless, the conservative image of Mount Holyoke College continues to persist around the country and, in

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particular, in the minds of the college admissions counselors. As a result, the counselors often fail to recommend the college to students who have said that they would like a little more independence or a little broader variety in the possibilities of their educational experience.

Such images also persist in the minds of faculty members seeking new positions. Growing numbers of professors, particularly younger ones, would like to be involved with an institution that is not the typically conservative, rigidly discipline-oriented institution once considered the norm. They are alienated by some institutions' images, not realizing that the options for experimentation and for fairly broad-ranging individual application of imagination to teaching are available in many places that they may not know of.

Although institutions with a mandate for experimentation can adopt many approaches, there appear to be severe limitations on the degree to which they can let the world know what they are trying, why and how they are trying it, and, most important, what appear to be the results of the experiments and their implications for others. There seem to be three major categories of transmitting information: intentional, organic, and random.

Intentional efforts to inform others of the progress, success, or failure of experimentation include bulletins, news releases, catalogues, speeches, and, perhaps, visits and direct exchanges of correspondence or personnel. The *organic* systems evolve through the normal functioning of the academic system and include faculty and student transfers, participation in national, regional, or local meetings, and operation of the admissions process. *Random* diffusion includes messages carried by or to parents or chance visitors, relationships with foundations, accrediting agencies, corporations, church groups, even chambers of commerce and other community-based organizations.

Publications and Publicity

Colleges today devote a considerable amount of time, energy, and money to telling the public what they are trying to achieve, how they are trying to do it, and what degree of success they have achieved in various experimental efforts. To this end, they produce an ever-increasing number of news releases, magazines, brochures, and other written material. In addition, they fill out annual questionnaires to remain listed in the major guides to colleges and universities, such as *Cass & Birnbaum*.

Colleges are also increasingly conveying their message by radio, television, film, and videotape. Still further, they present their administrators, faculty members, students, and trustees to the public in lectures, forums, and informal talks. And finally, they present information and perhaps even inspiration by means of increasingly innovative, informative, and even provocative catalogues and official viewbooks.

New College is no exception to this trend. In the academic year 1971-1972, New College printed 18,000 catalogues. As in previous years, the catalogue was unusual in format and content, unusual perhaps more for what it did not contain than for what it did. A small pocketbook publication approximately 120 pages long, the catalogue included considerable information about the innovative nature of the college's program, but it did not list courses, course credits, or requirements. It received wide distribution: nearly 10,000 catalogues were sent to college advisors, or placement officers in high schools and prep schools around the country; about 3,000 were sent out in response to mail inquiries; 1,000 were mailed or given personally by members of the faculty, staff, and administration; and the bulk of the remaining 4,000 were given to students when they arrived at the college.

Every year, in addition to the catalogue, the college pro-

duced the *All Purpose Bulletin*, a quarterly. In 1971-1972, the total printing was 70,000 copies. Approximately 50,000 copies were distributed through a mass mailing list provided through the Merit Scholar and other programs. Others were mailed in response to inquiries and distributed directly to college advisors in the high schools and prep schools as well as to friends of the college, donors, and almost anyone with a known interest in the institution. An eight-page foldout, this bulletin was inexpensive to prepare and generally up to date and topical in content. It proved to be a major means of announcing new policies and the results of earlier efforts at change.

Still another regular publication was a newsletter, the *Phoenix*, which had a circulation of 4,000. Produced by the public information office, this publication contained current information about the progress of the college and was largely directed to potential or actual donors. During the academic year 1971-1972, the public relations office put out 317 news releases, which were sent not only to local newspapers, but also to the wire services and to such publications as the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, the *Education Supplement of the New York Times*, and *Time* magazine.

In addition to these news releases, 135 feature articles appeared in the local or national press. These articles were sometimes written by college personnel, but more often written, at the invitation or suggestion of the college, by staff members of newspapers or magazines or by freelance writers. Such newspapers as the Sunday supplement to the *Chicago Tribune*, the *Christian Science Monitor*, and the *New York Times* published feature articles about the college and its various innovative practices and philosophies. In its earlier days, of course, the college was far more newsworthy. Nonetheless, feature articles about the institution continue to appear regularly around the country and abroad.

Finally, the college has published brief speeches by the president or other administrators, annual reports by the president, and brief articles by members of the faculty on the educational practices of the college. These occasional publications, which have been directed toward various audiences, have in most cases had a total production of less than 1,000 copies.

With students drawn from all over the United States and abroad, New College has depended less on radio and television for publicity than more-urban institutions that attract students from their immediate area. Nonetheless, the college has participated in radio and television programs, some initiated by the college and produced and directed by college personnel, others initiated at the invitation of stations WTVT and WFLA-TV in Tampa, the television hub of the area. Movies and filmstrips have been used on a relatively limited basis, and most of the audiovisual materials prepared by the college have been either directly or indirectly related to its fund-raising efforts. In contrast, however, the college has widely used opportunities to present its program personally to diverse audiences. Locally, the president and other members of the college staff and faculty have spoken to service clubs (Rotary, Kiwanis, and Sertoma), civic groups (the AAUW, the Civic League, and others), and college-related groups (such as the Ivy League Club, Harvard Club, Yale Club, and Dartmouth Club). Also, an organized Student Speakers Bureau actively recruited about 30 students a year to talk to civic clubs, churches, and other organizations about the college or about special subjects. Church groups have called on the college for speakers, and there have been numerous opportunities to spread the word about the college's activities and program through the United Church, the Unitarian Church, and such institutions as the Union Theological Seminary, Chicago Theological Seminary, and the Pacific School of Religion.

As for the world of higher education, the president of the college has addressed the American Association for Higher Education, the Association of American Colleges, the Council for Higher Education, and such regional groups as the Florida Association of Colleges and the Independent Colleges and Universities of Florida. Faculty members and officers of the college have similarly spoken for their professional groups and participated in panel discussions and other public presentations of the program of the college across the country.

Campus Visits

Campus visits by an individual, a group, or a combination of both are perhaps the most common tactic employed by an institution concerned with change. An administrator—often the president or a committee of faculty members and/or students—decides that his institution needs new policies or practices and proceeds to select places to visit, institutions known (or believed) to be "doing interesting things."

That New College was one of those places is testified to by visits from 25 to 30 colleges or universities between 1966 and 1971. The visitors ranged from formally elected faculty committees (Furman, Justin Morrill College, Limestone, Western College) to individual faculty members or administrators (Franklin Pierce, Hampshire, Marlboro, Tougaloo, Campus Free College), to student-organized groups (Oberlin, Old Westbury, Goddard), and to combinations of the above. It is by no means certain that New College was even aware of some visits, nor is it clearly recorded who made up all the visiting groups, how they had been selected, and more important, what happened when they returned to their home campus. In general, it appears that formally selected groups reported to those who had

chosen them; informal groups formed equally informal pressure groups on their campuses working toward change; and individuals, particularly top administrators, reported to no one, but simply added items observed here and there in their various campus visits to their arsenal of project plans.

The following section describes a selected number of these visiting groups. An effort has been made to choose a representative cross-section of institutions. Wherever possible, a return visit has been made to the home campus, interviews sought with those who visited or who were aware of the visit, and some determination made of the outcome of the visit.

Justin Morrill College of Michigan State University. Justin Morrill's stated objective was to create an experimental learning medium within the structure of a large public university. The group that visited New College was formally structured and consisted of two students, one faculty member, and one administrator (who may also have been a member of the faculty). Their visit to the campus lasted four days, and they are reported to have met with faculty, division chairmen, the president, and rather large numbers of students. They seem to have been concerned largely with off-campus and independent studies, with some emphasis on overseas studies. They were to have reported to the academic dean of the college, and it was expected that out of this visit and others might come ideas that would be both educationally and financially feasible, given the expected structure of Justin Morrill.

As usual, it is impossible to determine the impact of this visit. However, Justin Morrill continues to remain an experimental unit within the university, with structures generally much less rigid than those of the university at large. And it is still actively involved with what is now known as field experience education.

Oberlin College. During the late 1960's and early 1970's, Oberlin went through some of the same throes of confrontation and campus unrest that characterized many colleges at that time. The group that visited New College reflected an effort on the part of a concerned student group to lessen campus tensions; they sought to determine whether it was possible to adopt some of the methods of the experimental colleges and thereby divert students from the relatively formal and structured processes then generally prevalent on the campus. The student-selected group of three students spent a week living on the campus of the college. They followed up this visit with an invitation to the president of New College and his wife to visit the Oberlin campus and participate in an educational forum also being held under student auspices.

It is difficult to be precise about the effect of this particular visit, although both students and faculty report a considerable change in campus attitudes toward independent work, off-campus studies, and interdisciplinary majors.

Hampshire College. Before Hampshire had opened and *The Making of a College* had been published, Charles R. Longsworth, now president of Hampshire (he was then assistant to the president), paid a week-long visit to New College to talk with admissions personnel, other administrators, and some faculty members and students. Since the structure and aims of Hampshire have been well described in *The Making of a College,* it is not necessary to outline them here. Recent visits to the Hampshire campus, however, confirm the many similarities in structure, attitude, and particularly in the organization and personalities of the two faculties. These suggest that New College at least presented a situation that was harmonious with the general intent of those who were about to establish Hampshire College.

Some of the same forces that operated at New College

are now beginning to make themselves felt at Hampshire. Perhaps because of the many conceptual similarities between the two institutions and the resultant similarities in the kinds of faculty members they attracted, Hampshire seems to be moving toward decreasing emphasis on the comprehensive examination, increasing openness to larger segments of independent study, and a general weakening of divisional identities. These changes, combined with a general increase in the fluidity of program and structure, are precisely what occurred at New College, causing one to wonder whether there is not some almost inevitable progression set in motion once one abandons the traditional structures of higher education.

Furman University. Furman traces its history back to 1827, when the South Carolina Baptist State Convention established it as an educational institution for training Baptist ministerial students. Through the years, it has remained a respected traditional and somewhat conservative institution. Evidently, at the instigation of a new president, Gordon Blackwell, the faculty elected a four-man committee to visit New College for three or four days to find out what could be learned from a college that was experimental in both structure and organization. On their return to South Carolina, the committee was to report to the faculty.

A recent visit to the college confirms that this visit and others have had an important effect on Furman's offerings. Independent studies and off-campus learning opportunities are now widely available to students, as are interdisciplinary programs. Internships and other forms of field experience learning are promoted, and overseas study is on the increase.

These changes have had a healthy effect on Furman's admissions patterns in comparison to its competitors. Rather than experiencing a major decline in applications, Furman's admissions office perceives a greater interest in

its program than was apparent under the traditional model.

Campus Free College. An emerging institution committed to 100 percent nonresidential learning tactics, Campus Free College was at first perplexed by the problem of validation and control of studies done at a distance. Recent conversations with Campus Free College trustees and staff members revealed that one staff member, as assistant to the director, spent about two weeks at New College, primarily to talk to students and faculty members and to discuss the contract system at New College with the college registrar. Campus Free College uses an adaptation of the New College contract as the primary instrument for assigning and evaluating student performance.

Franklin Pierce College. Franklin Pierce College is a private undergraduate institution designed almost from the beginning for virtually open admissions. The student body, therefore, tends to include students of modest ability but often quite high levels of motivation. The president of the college visited New College, prompted by the desire to observe those elements of the New College program that reflected a concern about motivation rather more than academic ability. At the time of his visit, he stated that he believed that the educational world had underemphasized the value of freedom for less able students in favor of an operating principle that seemed to say that only the most able students could benefit from independence and an increased level of self-determination in their studies.

From recent conversations with the president and students of Franklin Pierce, it appears questionable whether the president found much at New College to influence his recommendations for the structure of Franklin Pierce. In general, its program is quite traditional although such areas as interdisciplinary studies reflect an effort to create a more open educational environment.

Faculty and Student Migration

When it was decided to create Evergreen State College as an experimental college, the planners of its social-academic-intellectual design sought out a group of faculty members and administrators from known experimental college programs. The original planning group came from Reed College (1), Old Westbury (4), New College (1), University of Chicago (1), and Santa Cruz (1). (In the first year or two of operations, these faculty members were joined by others from Prescott, Franconia, Antioch, Pitzer, and the Portland Learning Community, as well as additional recruits from their home institutions.) Faculty migration is, then, related to the spread of innovative higher education.

At New College, faculty members left for two basic reasons. First, some found the lack of structure disturbing and uncomfortable and moved on to somewhat more stable institutions. They rarely left for totally structured colleges and universities, but rather sought places where there was at least some effort to be different. Three New College faculty members and two administrators joined the newly formed group at the University of Wisconsin, Green Bay. One moved to the University of South Florida when it began to exert an influence as one of the more interesting of the state universities. Others left for such places as the University of Pittsburgh, University of Missouri at St. Louis, Rollins College, and Duquesne. In one rather special case, a faculty member left New College for Hobart only to discover that he found precisely the opposite problem there—too much structure. He returned to New College, where he is still happy.

Second, some faculty members left the college in search of still more change. They apparently found that the educational practices and policies of the college were still too rigid and moved on, either to newly forming institutions or to places already known for their experimental nature. Two

faculty members moved to Evergreen State College, one to Prescott, one to Hampshire, two to Empire State College, and one to New College of the University of Alabama. To this list one might add Nell Eurich, who went as provost to a rather traditional college, Manhattanville, but soon managed to be part of a thoroughly innovative movement that resulted in major changes at that institution.

New College faculty members at other institutions play roles that show that they have taken with them much of what they experienced in Sarasota. The faculty member who went to Prescott, for example, is the chairman of the Academic Policy Committee, which is continuing to redesign the experimental program of that college. Both of those who transferred to Evergreen are actively involved in new designs and new models for that institution. The faculty member who went to Hampshire has been placed in charge of an imaginative fellows program, which he himself helped to design. The message does get carried by such transfers, and more often than not they either find or place themselves in positions where they are able still further to change their new academic environment.

Student transfers are a little different. Almost all New College students who went to another institution—except perhaps for a few who followed in the footsteps of a partner—transferred to experimenting institutions, such as Sarah Lawrence, Antioch, Prescott, Goddard, Hampshire, and Franconia.

Again, almost all of them were actively involved in campus politics and often participated in academic policy planning. It is less certain that they continue to exert positive leadership, since they transferred to schools that were already dynamic; nonetheless, there is a specific involvement in change in almost every case.

Whereas faculty members and undergraduate students have tended to transfer to schools that are more or less consonant with New College, graduates have with un-

believable consistency gone on to highly traditional graduate and professional schools. All eight Ivy League colleges are heavily represented, including both their law and medical schools, as are such institutions as the University of Chicago, the University of Michigan, Berkeley, Stanford, the University of North Carolina, and Duke. We have found no very satisfactory answer for this phenomenon.

National, Regional, and Local Organizations

Faculty members at new colleges quickly call to the administration's attention their need for affiliation, intellectual stimulation, and information. They are soon involved in the huge network of the educational establishment, by attending national or regional meetings of learned or professional societies, writing papers, and making informal contacts. These events spread the word about the ways in which their particular disciplines and interests fit into an innovative institution.

Concurrently, the institution becomes a joiner. By 1971 New College, through its various officers, held membership in national, state, and regional organizations, including the American Council on Education, American Association of Colleges, American College Public Relations Association, American Association of Higher Education, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Florida Association of Colleges and Universities, and Independent Colleges and Universities of Florida. The college was normally represented at annual meetings, and the president and other officers of the college regularly presented papers, participated in panels, and led discussion groups. The forum in each case was different, but few opportunities were neglected to make a case for the innovative institution. The

effect of these efforts is hard to judge. Follow-up correspondence, however, was often heavy.

Admissions

One direct means of transmitting information about change among colleges is the admissions process. Pressure for full enrollment has created a very intense system of recruitment, particularly in the highly competitive colleges and universities. College recruiters constantly hear the comparisons and attitudes of young people. They find, for example, that interest in their institution is overshadowed by the appeal of programs in other institutions. Students may report that they probably will not apply to the interviewer's institution, for example, because it may or may not have independent study programs, a rigid academic structure, or a traditional grading system. The admissions officer will report this to his or her academic superior, or to a faculty admissions committee.

Such institutions as Hampshire College and New College often receive applications from the same students. Van Halsey, the director of admissions at Hampshire, pointed out that after Harvard, Hampshire shared the largest number of cross applications in 1971 with Brown University. He explained that the relatively new changes in the undergraduate curriculum at Brown and the total integration of Brown and Pembroke colleges appealed to the same kind of student who applied to Hampshire.

New College has always had considerable numbers of applications that overlap with those of such institutions as Antioch, Hampshire, and Goddard. Only recently have Evergreen State College, the University of California at Santa Cruz, Prescott, Justin Morrill, and Brown begun to

appear in considerable numbers in the cross-application records.

These are precisely the institutions whose academic patterns have newly emerged as being consonant with those of New College. It is not unrealistic, therefore, to view the admissions process as having a substantive relationship to the process of change.

Trustees

One element that effects the transfer of information from one college to another is the presence on many boards of trustees of individuals who simultaneously serve other institutions as administrators, trustees, or faculty members. This particular avenue of exchange, which tends to be underestimated, can be rather specifically demonstrated in the case of New College.

In its early days, New College had a functional relationship with the United Church of Christ. As a result, at least two members of the board, as members of one or more national committees of the Church, also served on the boards of several other institutions: seminaries, colleges, or universities. Thus, when the United Church became involved with establishing Prescott College in Arizona, there was considerable exchange of ideas and information through the trustees. Thus, the innovative structure at Prescott, which had strong individual characteristics, nevertheless benefited from the presence of two strong trustees at meetings and discussions of policies and procedures at New College.

Again, when one of the trustees of New College, Nell Eurich, became the provost of Manhattanville College and sought to introduce whatever innovations might make sense

for that institution, she appears to have drawn heavily upon her experience as trustee of New College and chairman of the Trustees' Academic Policy Committee. A glance at the article: "Manhattanville: From Tradition to Innovation" in *Change* magazine (November 1972) will show not only substantive similarities between the new programs at Manhattanville and those at New College, but even close affinities in the language used to describe them.

New College also received some very valuable information as a result of the presence on its board of Victor Butterfield, who had long been president of Wesleyan University and an innovator of considerable imagination. In fact, the presence of such educators as Eurich, Butterfield, and Douglas Knight, has helped sustain the sense of readiness for change, which so thoroughly characterizes New College.

Accreditation

Accreditation associations have long recognized that their role is both accreditation and guidance. Before their campus visits, members of accreditation teams are almost always advised to regard their role primarily as that of helpers, not critics. When an accreditation group spends three or four days visiting a campus, its mission is to acquire basic information, much of it already prepared, and then to evaluate the degree to which this information conforms with its standards.

Accreditors can have difficulty in evaluating innovative institutions because of the lack of grades and departmental structure, the prevalence of individualized academic programs, and the prevalence of study abroad programs in institutions that are not subject to evaluation by the ac-

crediting agencies. They must readjust their premises. Often the accreditors, who usually come from different institutions, return to their home campuses jarred by the unfamiliar and sometimes disturbing practices they have observed.

Frequently accreditors are receptive to introducing some new features on their home campuses. For example, Alfred Neumann of the University of Houston made several visits to the New College campus as chairman of the original Visiting Committee of the Southern Association to New College. When I visited him in January, 1973, I learned that he had been named chancellor of a new unit of the University of Houston, to be located some 35 to 40 miles from Houston. Dean Neumann, the principal person responsible for designing the institution, reported that the new unit was going to be different—it would be set up with a divisional rather than a departmental structure and would include considerable opportunity for independent and interdisciplinary studies. It would, in other words, have some very specific characteristics in common with New College. I asked the dean whether this design had evolved as a result of his exposure to New College. At first he demurred, saying that it was simply a logical and reasonable departure, but later in the evening he returned to the subject and said something like: "You know, you may be right. What I ran into at New College was at the time very new to me and I filed it away as being of no particular applicability to the University of Houston. But now I can see that the New College experience—reinforced I am sure by other broad changes in academia—may well have had an influence on my thinking."

There is good reason to believe that Dean Neumann's experience has been duplicated by many other members of groups that have visited innovative institutions, although it is difficult to estimate how many. One other specific instance might be cited: The enormous growth of overseas

studies in the past decade has been of considerable concern to the accrediting agencies. By 1972, the Federation of Regional Accrediting Commissions of Higher Education decided it was time to send a team to examine the operations of foreign university centers. For, many study abroad programs are directly or indirectly run by foreign universities with only minimal intervention from U.S. institutions, usually in the form of a field director. The team found that these programs were very diverse and uneven in quality. When the federation's report was made widely available to U.S. educational authorities, a number of policies and procedures changed, mostly to maximize controls over the quantity and quality of study abroad programs, without diminishing the cross-cultural effects, the essence of the innovations being attempted.

In another example, the Southern Association felt it necessary to revise one of its standards, standard 9, to deal with the specific problems of rapidly changing and innovating institutions. This standard, subtitled "special activities," has for a long time been a sort of catch-all to include supplemental and special educational programs. Under this rubric are included branches and special centers; extension, correspondence, and home study courses; foreign travel and study; and conferences, workshops, and special summer sessions. When large-scale programs of independent study, learning contracts, internships, and other learning modes came to play a major role in the educational programs of most undergraduates in some innovating institutions, standard 9 moved into a central position. Indeed, the Southern Association has only very recently created a special staff position for a person whose primary responsibility will be monitoring the development of activities and programs included in this standard. That this individual happens to be a former New College administrator is no accident.

The Union for Experimenting Colleges and Universities

The relationship of New College to the Union for Experimenting Colleges and Universities is a rather special case. Briefly, the union was formed in the mid-1960's by a rather small and more or less homogeneous group of experimenting colleges. Its purpose was mutual support, exchange of ideas, and the joint sponsorship of innovative programs. Best known among these programs is the University Without Walls (UWW), initiated by the union and carried forward by Sam Baskin, who has served as the chief executive of the union since its beginning.

New College joined the union just after it had been organized in order to participate in the exchange of ideas. As the union grew, however—and particularly as the UWW concept evolved—its member institutions differed greatly in size, purpose, organization, and philosophy. Probably the UWW program could never have emerged as an effective national alternative to traditional educational patterns had this not been the case. But the inclusion of such disparate organizations as New College, Roger Williams College, Staten Island Community College, and the University of Minnesota as equal partners in the same organization soon meant that the union, as a vehicle for disseminating innovative approaches, was so diluted that it no longer really served that function. The union also had severe financial and educational problems and was unable to do very much about solving them. In addition, even in this homogeneous group of idealistic institutions, self-interest tended to supersede group interest.

Foundations and Government Agencies

One of the less noticed channels for transmitting new ideas

in higher education is the grant application. The large and reasonably sophisticated foundations and such government agencies as the National Science Foundation and the National Humanities Endowment have on their staffs well-trained educational specialists who are on the lookout for new and promising educational ventures. The college or university that presents a grant proposal to such an agency must expect it to be carefully screened and evaluated for its innovative content. Those who prepare grant applications are well aware of this and introduce into as many applications as possible some indication that the proposal in hand has innovative features that make supporting it more valid.

Since the number of proposals submitted to foundations and government agencies far exceeds the number that can be funded, officials have found it necessary to point out to grant applicants why their proposals are being rejected. In so doing, the officials often indicate other institutions or individuals who are in fact engaged in activities very similar to those being proposed. Thus, unsuccessful grant applications often transmit information on innovation in other institutions.

Similarly, institutions preparing proposals very often research the details of grants that have been accepted by the institution to which they are applying. This search, too, results in transmittal of information.

Foundations and government institutions also act as transmitters of information in other ways. Either as a result of legislation or decisions by trustees, new policies frequently indicate the areas and levels of support that will prevail in the immediate future. A foundation may decide, for example, that a given area of scholarship has been too long neglected and announce potential support for that area. It takes little more than a paragraph in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* to set in motion fact-finding and grant-writing activities of major proportions. In the process,

many institutions learn what is being done by others in the same field and what "innovations" may not really be new.

Government and foundation personnel are notoriously peripatetic in their regular, or irregular, visits to campuses across the country. They act as carriers of information about new ideas, new processes, and new experiments. To no small degree they are responsible for diffusing information about change in higher education.

A few dangers in this system stem essentially from the inefficient assessment processes referred to above. It is quite possible, for example, that an idea that is rejected because it has already been tried somewhere else may prove to be a creative move in another organizational system. One has only to reexamine the grant applications rejected by one agency to find sound ideas for change whose time had not yet come, or equally sound proposals that had been started in institutions that were not yet ready to take maximum advantage of them. Any foundation or government grant-making officer could fill in the details of this particular phenomenon from his own experience.

The growing practice of issuing regular and detailed reports has greatly increased the role of the foundations in transmitting information. This practice is perhaps defendable primarily on these grounds because in earlier days the direct grantee of a foundation was all too often the only one who benefited very much from the grant. Now, the entire world of higher education has an opportunity to learn about new departures, to examine the ways in which they have been evaluated, and to weigh their merit for their own institution.

Miscellaneous Methods of Exchange

Parents. A number of other groups and individuals come

in contact with New College and spread the word about its character. Three times a year, rather large numbers of students' parents are in Sarasota—in the fall at the opening of the college, in mid-November for parents weekend, and in June for the closing of the school. Parents are also in touch with their children on a more or less regular basis during the school year, and questions raised by the unfamiliar characteristics of the college serve to elicit more than the usual numbers of queries.

Another factor has a more direct bearing on dissemination of data. A comparatively large number of New College students come from homes where one or both of the parents are engaged in college teaching or administration. The parents often learn about ideas at New College through their children and sometimes they suggest that their own institutions adopt the innovations. For example, a dean of Tusculum College had children at New College and became interested in some of its approaches. He spent a considerable amount of time with the president of New College and later reported that much of what he had learned had been of use in shaping changes at his college.

Community relations. Most college towns have some raison d'etre other than to host an academic institution. Sarasota is a tourist center, well-known for being more concerned with culture than with nightclubs and thereby attracting an unusually large percentage of intellectually serious visitors. New College derives some benefit from this fact, opening up many of its lectures, concerts, and other activities to the local community in return for fairly considerable financial and moral support. This process, too, serves to spread the message of innovation to a key group, many of whom turn out to be trustees of other institutions and persons with considerable influence in their home communities and organizations.

As do many other colleges, New College lends its facili-

ties to community organizations for meetings, public discussions, and lectures, with the result that many special interest groups come to have regular and fruitful interaction with the college community. Through these contacts, especially in the case of the public interest groups, the unusual nature of the college's program becomes known and discussed, not only locally.

Finally, the local chamber of commerce and such promotional magazines as *Sarasota Scene* mail out annually a surprising number of well-edited and lavishly illustrated brochures, pamphlets, and periodicals. Information about New College is usually included in this literature, and the incoming mail at the college attests to the wide geographical distribution it achieves and the effective message it conveys.

FOUR

Conclusions and Recommendations

As we have seen, a variety of methods are used to transmit information about experiments in higher education. On the whole, these mechanisms are haphazard and inadequate —they fail to provide complete, accurate information because changes occur so rapidly. In addition to the efforts of individual institutions, therefore, I propose that some research or study organization assume as a major responsibility the accumulation and transmission of descriptive and evaluative information about change in higher education. The descriptive information includes such data as where innovative programs are under way or being planned; who is designing and managing them; when and why have the programs been begun; how are they being financed; and what institutional objectives they are meant to serve.

Once this information is gathered, catalogued, and indexed, it should be evaluated to determine the institutional characteristics or circumstances that favored (or pre-

judiced) that particular innovation; the priorities and sacrifices made to accommodate the innovative program; the criticisms that were raised and how they were answered; and the costs and benefits of the program. Methods should be devised to assess the effect of the programs on the students as well as their impact on the other constituent elements of the institution. In all these evaluations, it would be essential to discover and record the verifiable data.

What kind of organization could carry out these functions so that what was learned could genuinely help the whole academic community? There appear to be four possibilities: units of the national government; university-based research centers; national educational associations; and private agencies either already existing or newly formed expressly for this purpose.

National government. The government agency that would most logically be involved in this kind of effort is, of course, the U.S. Office of Education. Having relatively large resources, concern for innovation, and the ability to call on highly trained and proficient scholars and technicians, it would seem to offer almost ideal qualifications for the job. In some ways, indeed, the Office of Education, through the ERIC system, special task forces, and other agencies, has already contributed to some of the backup effort which could be helpful to anyone who sought to identify and evaluate innovative programs. But the Office of Education is concerned with issues that range from preschool to highly technical and professional educational problems, and with a nationwide objective to strengthen the entire educational process. It is ill-equipped to focus in an operational way on problems that may largely concern private higher education and that may also require a built-in service function. Such issues could easily lead to legal and conflict-of-interest problems, which the office would be reluctant to deal with. The Office of Education

could, no doubt, provide both financial and personnel support to whatever agency attempted to perform the functions outlined above. But most probably, the operations of such an agency would have to be carried out too quickly to be dealt with by a major bureaucracy. Bureaucratic procedures with very nearly endless proposal-evaluation-rewrite-assessment requirements would probably proceed too ponderously to produce the kind of data needed in time for it to be useful.

University research centers. Many major educational institutions—the University of California at Berkeley, the University of Michigan, Cornell University, the University of Wisconsin at Green Bay, Stanford University, and others —already have "centers for the improvement of undergraduate education" or "centers for the study of higher education." Few would deny that these centers are performing a useful research and analysis role. Many of their reports and monographs have proved useful to educators, particularly to those who need carefully developed statistical data to support suggested changes or new departures. For the most part, however, it is precisely because much of their effort is committed to their basic research that they, too, seem unlikely candidates for a role that implies action for service as well as research. The new Stanford Center for Research and Development may prove to have been established on a basis different enough from the rest to make it an exception to this general statement. Among the specific contributions of these centers one might also note that Cornell University produced *Yellow Pages of Undergraduate Innovation,* a publication that also could serve as an action-oriented piece of work and a most useful compendium. By and large, however, these centers continue to make their contributions slowly, with publication of research frequently lagging far behind the investigation. Whatever agency does finally attempt to identify and eval-

uate changes in higher education will indeed benefit from research performed by these university-based centers.

Educational associations. Among the national educational associations, the most obvious candidates are the American Council on Education, the National Association for Higher Education, and the American Association of Colleges, with the possible addition of the Federation of Regional Accrediting Commissions of Higher Education. There are, of course, many other national associations, but most of them are concerned with specific groups and/or the technical problems of a rather limited constituency.

To some extent, of course, these major associations have been concerned with information exchange, in some cases with support and encouragement from the American College Testing Program, the Educational Testing Service, or the College Entrance Examination Board. For example, Paul Dressel of Michigan State University has edited at least one monograph published jointly by the American Association for Higher Education and the American College Testing Program, attempting to arrive at an appraisal of some of the experimenting liberal arts colleges. He has drawn heavily on the experience of such scholars as Arthur Chickering and Alexander Astin, both of whom were at the time closely associated with the Office of Research at the American Council on Education. Any competent bibliography on change in higher education will include other examples of similar kinds of cooperation and involvement by these national associations in both specific and general questions relating to change. There is a significant difference, however, between researching, writing, and editing monographs, articles, books, or surveys and establishing a service-oriented operation that is prepared to gather and assess information.

Most of the major national associations provide services to their members, but anyone who has seriously attempted

to develop up-to-date data from them has too often found himself overwhelmed by the sheer mass of the information available, much of it of little or no use and much of what might be useful too often assembled for quite different purposes and therefore inadequate.

Private agencies. Private research and study agencies are also possible candidates for collecting and evaluating information on innovations in higher education. Such organizations have two assets—specialization and a concern for the individual needs of the client—and a few of them do have the potential to develop the required competence. Qualified agencies in this area are scarce, however, in part because too few people have the experience and breadth of vision to put together a group committed to this type and level of problem solving. Moreover, the ideal organization should have a high level of staffing, management, and strong financial support, as well as the ability to gather, evaluate, store, and retrieve data. Above all, in this era of scarce resources, the organization should have imagination and objectivity to meet the urgent, continual need of institutions for change in order to survive.